

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are all the claims presently pending in the application. New claims 7-9 have been added to more completely define the invention. There are no prior art rejections. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claims 1-6 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome minor informalities and rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-6 have been amended in a manner believed fully responsive to all points raised by the Examiner, thereby to pass all of the claims to allowance. No new matter has been added.

It is noted that the claim amendments herein are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims, or for any statutory requirements of patentability.

Further, it is noted that, notwithstanding any claim amendments made herein, Applicants' intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements, even if amended herein or later during prosecution.

FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

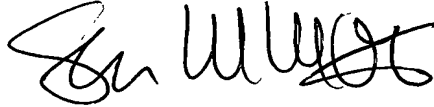
In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-9, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

Serial No.: 09/855,621
Docket No. N01276US
NIS.035

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies in fees or to credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully submitted,



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12/8/04
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